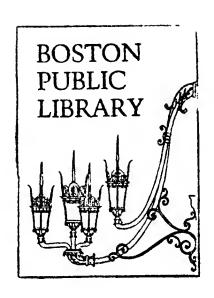
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BRA 879

Harborwalk Environmental Communication System Phase II Report

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City of Boston Raymond L. Flynn, Mayor

Boston Redevelopment Authority Stephen Coyle, Director

September 1991



Contents

1	Introduction
2	Goals
3	Objectives
5	Concept
8	Definition of Elements
15	Landmarks
16	Logo Requirements & Applications
17	Logo 1 Compass Rose
18	Logo 2 Pictorial Oval
19	Logo 3 Harpoon

Appendix Maps & Illustrations

i - xix

20



Harborpark and Harborwalk

Harborpark, initiated in 1984 by Mayor Flynn, is a comprehensive planning and development program which aims to ensure balanced, controlled and thoughtful growth of Boston's waterfront. Consisting of physical plans for public and private improvements guided by policies and guidelines regarding public access and urban design, the Harborpark program aims to ensure that all people have access to the economic and physical opportunities offered by the Harbor and its waterfront.

Harborwalk, a continuous public open space system along Boston's water-front, is a project within the Harborpark program. It is a major addition to the city's open space system and an extension (to and along the Harbor) of Frederick Law Olmsted's "Emerald Necklace" of open spaces and parks. Harborwalk is the primary mechanism by which the Harborpark program's goal of public access to the waterfront will be achieved. Harborwalk will serve not only to create access to formerly inaccessible waterfront, but additionally to provide opportunities for cultural, recreational and educational activities.

The Harborwalk open space system will consist of a great variety of integrated elements including landscaped walkways with seating and lighting, parks and recreational facilities, cultural and historic facilities, fishing piers, outdoor performance areas, kiosks and shops, viewing/observation decks, marinas, sculpture & public artwork, sailing clubs, water transportation, and an environmental communication system, a system which is the focus of this report.

Harborwalk Environmental Communication System

The Harborwalk Environmental Communication System is a system of three dimensional graphic and other design elements in the built environment that:

- 1. Identifies Harborwalk
- 2. Directs people to and along Harborwalk
- 3. Informs & educates people about Harborwalk
- 4. Orients people to the Harbor, to Boston and its neighborhoods

The development of this design approach will, when implemented, create a graphitecture that fully expresses the character, quality and vision of the City of Boston, while meeting both its practical and aesthetic needs.



The goals of the Harborwalk Environmental Communication System are to:

- 1) Establish a bold, attractive identity for Harborwalk that reflects the distinctive character of the Boston waterfront (day and night visibility).
- 2) Maximize linked physical access (year-round, day and night) for pedestrian, bicycle, vehicular and marine traffic to Harborwalk, Inner Waterfront Neighborhoods, Emerald Necklace, Riverwalks and Harbor Islands.
- 3) Maximize visual access to Harborwalk (year-round, day and night) from both land and sea.
- 4) Provide historical, cultural, and educational information.
- 5) Promote recreational resources along Harborwalk.
- 6) Accommodate access to Harborwalk by all user groups.
- 7) Promote public and private development.
- 8) Promote maritime resources and industries.
- 9) Facilitate orientation to public transportation (land and water).
- 10) Facilitate ease of maintenance.



In the following list, the objectives of the Harborwalk Environmental Communication System are divided into classifications of information that must be communicated by the system.

Identification

Identify:

- Harborwalk pathway
- Prime Destinations: Landmarks and sites within the Harborwalk Zone
- Public Facilities: Restrooms, Telephones
- Views/Vistas
- Boat Landings
- Water Transportation

Direction/Circulation

Orient to:

- Harborwalk pathway
- Prime Attractions: Landmarks and sites within the Harborwalk Zone
- Public Facilities: Restrooms, Telephones
- Land/Water Transportation
- Parking

Clarify:

- Pedestrian, bicycle, vehicular paths & boat landings
- Public/Private Access
- Access for People with Disabilities

Link to:

• Inner Waterfront Neighborhoods, Emerald Necklace, Riverwalks and

Harbor Islands

Historical/Cultural

Educate:

Regarding Cultural activities and

Historic features

Social/Economic

Promote:

• Maritime Resources & Industries

• Public/Private Development

• Recreational Resources



Regulatory

Develop:

• Sign Code & Zoning requirements

• Hierarchy of Information

• Rules and Regulations

Provide:

• Public Access Information

• Access for People with Disabilities

Site Amenities

Utilize/Create:

• Landmarks

• Lighting

• Viewing Binoculars

• Fences/Railings

• Public Art Elements

Other Criteria

Emphasize:

• Day & Night Use of the waterfront

• Human Scale

• All Season Use

Accomodate:

• User Groups (Residents, Commuters,

Students, Visitors, People with Disabilities)

Facilitate:

• Maintenance & Vandal-Resistance

Intersecting Graphic Systems

Integrate with:

• Private Development (e.g. Rowes Wharf)

• Blue Line Harborwalk

• Red Line Freedom Trail

• Charlestown Navy Yard

• National Park Service

• U.S. Coast Guard

• Mass Port

• Metropolitan District Commission

• MBTA

• Mass. Dept. of Public Works

• City of Boston



Thesis

The great cities of the world all have something in common. They each have a sense of place, expressed by the character and interrelationships of their history, architecture, streets, open spaces, people and geography. People move through cities – and experience them – in relation to axes, order, landmarks, context and use. Our guiding principles are to create elements that "show people the way" and reinforce a positive "image" for the city and its waterfront.

A well-designed urban communication system shows people the way and adds to the city's image. These communication elements become urban symbols – symbols that help make our city's environment understandable, animated and engaging. A successful Harborwalk Environmental Communication System must reinforce urban axes, order, landmarks, context and use. The system must inform and engage the people using the system.

Walk to the Sea

The "Walks to the Sea" will create an urban circulation structure that will identify, orient and guide people to Harborwalk. The "Walk to the Sea" directional sequence will begin at Boston Common, Bunker Hill, the State House and other prominent places near the harbor. Trailblazers, signs and other elements will reinforce these routes to Harborwalk. Refer to the Appendix for a map showing these routes.

The original "Walk to the Sea" as conceived by I.M. Pei begins at the State House and ends at Waterfront Park. This new concept of the Walks to the Sea expands this original concept. The names and origin points of these new Walks to the Sea are:

- 1. Little Mystic Channel
- 3. Bunker Hill
- 5. Haymarket
- 7. State Street
- 9. Congress Street

- 2. Navy Yard
- 4. Causeway Street
- 6. Hanover Street
- 8. Broad Street
- 10. Boston Common
- 11. Oliver Street



Communication Elements

Along the "Walks to the Sea" and on Harborwalk are a series of three dimensional communication elements. The communication system concept outlined on the following pages introduces a "system" of related communication elements including signs, lights, exhibits, objects, colors, information centers, landmarks, and site amenities.

Kit of Parts

The system features a "kit of parts" fabrication methodology that allows the display of various communication element combinations, simple manufacture, installation (both temporary and permanent) and maintenance in a broad variety of urban situations.

Materials, Typestyles, Colors

Placement, sequence and hierarchy are among the programmatic principles guiding a sign system's successful communication. More readily visible to the Harborwalker will be the form, materials, typefaces and colors of the communication elements. The approach to form (and scale) is indicated in the Communication Elements illustration. As a general approach, materials will be standardly available, flexible but expressive of Boston architecture (both historic and contemporary) and resistant to weather extremes, marine corrosion and incidental vandalism. Colors will be developed for appropriate expression of Boston's urban and marine character. Colors must be both complementary to the surroundings and provide needed contrast for visibility. Typestyles will be legible and readable. Clear, appropriately-designed typography is integral to the development of a distinctive graphic identity for Harborwalk.

Coordination with Existing Signs

Within the Harborwalk "Zone" shown on the Overview Map, all public and city signs will adhere to the new Harborwalk standards. All existing private site signs can maintain their own identity. Where appropriate, existing private signs can be integrated into the Harborwalk system. Within the Harborwalk Zone, the system will intersect and coordinate with other systems, including Blue Line Harborwalk, Red Line Freedom Trail, Charlestown Navy Yard and those of the various federal, state and local entities (listed on page 4).



Graphic Frequency Zones

In response to the varying levels of activity and architectural context throughout the Harborwalk Zone, three graphic "frequency zones" have been identified. They are defined as:

Moderate <u>Example Site</u>: BurroughsWharf Limited use of the communication elements: basic access signs & lighted "border". Purpose: to identify

Active <u>Example Site</u>: Waterfront Park Use of most communication elements. Purpose: to activate

Very Active <u>Example Site</u>: Long Wharf Extensive use of all communication elements including exhibits, information centers, site amenities and landmarks. Purpose: to energize



Reference the Appendix for illustration of Communication Elements.

Identification

Street Signs

Street signs will identify all streets within the Harborwalk Zone. The design of the street signs in the Harborwalk Zone will be consistent with the Harborwalk identity and complementary to the cultural/historic aspects of each district, adding color from the Harborwalk color palette as a visible element.

Water Transportation/Public Landing Signs

These signs will identify both water transportation services (water taxi, water shuttle, excursion, commuter) and points where watercraft have access to public landings & moorings.

Pylons

These freestanding dimensional elements will function as pedestrian seale axes, markers and orientation points. They can accommodate identification, direction, historic, social/economic & regulatory information.

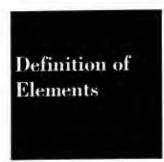
Visitor Information Centers

These will be freestanding structures or placed in existing structures (such as the Long Wharf Park and Water Taxi Terminal at Rowes Wharf). The centers must function and be accessible whether staffed or unstaffed, and their design must match their particular locations. These centers would contain the printed Harborwalk brochures, route maps, information on points of interest, water/land transportation and historic site pamphlets, exhibits, etc.

Gateways

Gateways will reinforce the Harborwalk identity at large scale, and be visible to pedestrians and drivers alike. These gateways are essential to creating a sense of arrival and transition from the surrounding eity to the "place" of Harborwalk. They are the points of arrival on the "Walk to the Sea". We will explore district gateways as elements within each neighborhood rather than as "border crossings".





Directional/ Circulation

Trailblazer Signs

These signs, located along prominent routes to Harborwalk, will identify Harborwalk as the primary message, in the same size as street name signs. *Information content:* Harborwalk logo, name and directional arrow. These "Walk to the Sea" trailblazer signs will direct users to Harborwalk. An additional sign panel from the "kit of parts" can be added below the trailblazer to list attractions in a particular area.

Directional Signs

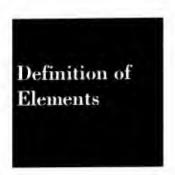
These signs will be placed along Harborwalk at appropriate intervals. These elements will be developed to be highly visible, readable and visually distinctive. Directional signs will direct users to the other Districts of Harborwalk and to primary destinations located within a particular district. Users must be able to see from one sign to the next and at decision points, clearly identifying the Harborwalk route and its links to the city and the landmarks located on and outside of Harborwalk. Information content: Harborwalk logo, name, adjacent districts, major destinations within the district (Downtown/Financial District, North End, Waterfront Park, Long Wharf Park, Fort Point Channel) with directional arrows.

Pylons

These freestanding dimensional elements will function as pedestrian scale axes markers and orientation points. They can accommodate identification, direction/circulation, historic, social/economic & regulatory information.

Pavement Medallions

Harborwalk's logo will be cast as pavement medallions, and inset into the various walking surfaces. They can be oriented to "north" and individually numbered for reference to printed "Harborwalking" maps. Using this approach, the compass logo will be an element of both identity and utility.



Historic/Cultural

Information Signs

Information signs will be integrated into the "kit of parts". These signs can be used to further describe exhibits and also identify places and points of interest along Harborwalk that do not warrant a large exhibit.

Pylons

These freestanding, dimensional elements will function as pedestrian scale markers and orientation points. They can accommodate identification, direction, historic/cultural, social/economic & regulatory information.

District Exhibits

Design of exhibits will relate to surrounding architecture and conditions, using themes appropriate to each neighborhood/district.

The following is a list of recommended exhibits and locations:

Ship Building Exhibit
"Life During Wartime" Exhibit
Charles River Dom & Locks Exhibit

Charles River Dam & Locks Exhibit

Boston Sports & Athletes Exhibit

Coast Guard Exhibit

Firefighting on Boston Harbor Boston Waterfront/Harbor Exhibit

"Waves of Immigration" Exhibit Olmsted's Emerald Necklace Exhibit Visitor Information Center Visitor Information Center

"Revolution and Renaissance" Exhibit
Expressing the Arts Community & its History
History of Shaving Exhibit
Historic Canals Exhibit
Commercial Fishing Exhibit

Pier 3 or Drydock 2/CNY

Pier 2/CNY

Charlestown Bridge or MDC

Locks

North End Playground/

North Station

Hanover Street Entrance/

Walk to the Sea

Firestation/Burroughs Wharf

Central Downtown
Waterfront Location

Central Artery on State Street

Christopher Columbus Park

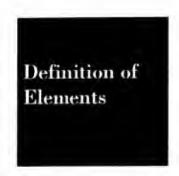
Long Wharf

Water Taxi Terminal Bldg. at

Rowes Wharf

Fort Point Channel

Fort Point Channel/Gillette Fort Point Channel End Fish Pier/South Boston



Social/Economic

A strategy and methodology must be developed to address how the Harborwalk Environmental Communication System will be promoted to and paid for by the private sector. These design standards, when implemented, will provide a highly visible and economically practical design approach that addresses the ever-changing Harborwalk environment.

Site Information Signs

Site Information Signs

Design approach will reconcile the adjacent project identities with that of Harborwalk, developing an approach that balances their identification needs with the identification/directional needs of Harborwalk.

Pylons

Pylons

These freestanding, dimensional elements will function as pedestrian scale markers and orientation points. They can accommodate identification, direction, historic, social/economic & regulatory information.

Construction Barriers

Construction Barriers

These will promote, identify and provide access to Harborwalk during construction on and along it, as well as providing information on the construction projects themselves. Central Artery North Area (CANA), the New Boston Garden, and the Central Artery Depression are specific examples of ongoing construction projects in the Harborwalk Zone.



Definition of Elements

Regulatory

Design will integrate the regulatory and restrictive information of the Harborwalk system with other public agency and private sector requirements. Signs must express public access as well as access for people with disabilities.

A standard, versatile bracket system that is economic and easily attached to different lightposts, columns, etc. will accommodate both Harborwalk and other regulatory signs. Again, the fabrication methodology of the "kit of parts" is essential.

Addressing the issue of "cleaning up" the current regulatory signs, our approach will be to combine related messages (such as multiple parking restriction signs) into one sign, utilizing more Department of Transportation symbols and only as much lettering as necessary to clearly communicate the regulatory information. The major regulatory sign types are:

Parking/Vehicular
Pedestrian/Bicycle (includes Restroom/Public Telephone signs)
Public Access
Access for People with Disabilities
Rules for Walkway (pets, etc.)

Definition of Elements

Site Amenities

As appropriate, amenities such as lighting, viewing binoculars, public art elements and landmarks will illuminate, engage, amuse and orient the Harborwalker.

Lighting

Lighting

Aqua/blue light standards will create a clear sense of safety and continuity for evening/night use. From a safety perspective, Harborwalk "aqua/blue" lighting will not be in conflict with marine lighting since red and green lights will not be used.

We will explore the light standards as variable and contextual, attachable to existing light posts. Also, we will develop appropriate illumination concepts for existing buildings, landmarks and public landings.

Viewing Binoculars

Viewing Binoculars

These elements, inspired by "ship-spotting" enthusiasts, will be placed at view/vista vantage points for use by Harborwalkers.

Fences/Railings

Fences/Railings

The design of the fence/railings will relate to different architectural and access conditions. The fence/railings will be developed in specific variations as part of the "kit of parts" that can stand alone, be complementary to a particular architectural context or reinterpreted as design specific to a particular building or site.

Public Art Elements

Public Art Elements

In keeping with the Boston tradition of art in public places, elements from small to large scale (seagulls to anchors) can be placed at appropriate locations along Harborwalk. Decorative, humorous, artistic - these elements will reinforce the unique urban character of Boston.

Definition of Elements

Landmarks

Existing "landmarks" on Harborwalk were identified with the BRA project team (see pg. 15). CSD will utilize these existing landmarks (Long Wharf Mast, Charlestown Bridge, etc.) as appropriate and then develop and introduce new landmarks (e.g., water jet fountain at New Public Pier/Long Wharf) that reinforce a powerful sense of identity for Harborwalk. Each landmark element must relate to its unique urban place. We are convinced that these elements are critical to making Harborwalk findable and walkable. Signs alone will not make Harborwalk a place, nor encourage people to walk along it. We must creatively define the paths to walk and reinforce their "connectedness".



Landmarks located on Harborwalk are:

Charlestown Navy

Yard

New Aquarium (Yard's End) (proposed) Nantucket Lightship (changes anchorage)

Pier 3 Cranes

U.S.S. Constitution

Charlestown

Charlestown Bridge

North Station

MDC Locks & Dam

North End

U.S. Coast Guard Station

Downtown/

Financial

Waterfront Park

Long Wharf Mast & Park

District

Fountain at New Public Picr/Long Wharf (proposed)

Aquarium Sculpture Harbor Towers

Rowes Wharf Arch & Water Taxi Terminal

Fort Point

Channel

Old Northern Avenue Bridge New Northern Avenue Bridge

Milk Bottle (Museum Wharf) Computer Museum Elevator Boston Tea Party Ship

South Boston

Commonwealth Pier/World Trade Center

Fish Pier

Concrete Silos



Introduction

Harborwalk is a walk to and around Boston Harbor, a city with a significant history and a bold future. Its identity must be distinctive and reflect the city's maritime history and its vision for the future. The three logo approaches presented are the result of a thorough review with the BRA project team. One approach will be chosen in this phase (Draft Master Plan) for further exploration, development and finalization in the next phase (Preliminary Design).

Requirements

The logo for Harborwalk must:

- 1) Identify Harborwalk
- 2) Reflect Boston's maritime history/Boston image
- 3) Function as a wayfinding/orientation tool
- 4) Be applied in a variety of formats, scales, materials, colors, and media dimensions.

Applications

The logo must be identifiable, legible and functional in a wide variety of formats, materials, dimensions, media, colors and scales - including the following applications:

Three Dimensional Two Dimensional

Cast Printed
Carved Silkscreened
Sandblasted Illuminated
Embossed Embroidered

Illuminated Routed

Comments on Existing Logo (Harborpark)

Critical analysis of the existing logo:

- 1. Does not identify Harborwalk as a "walking" path. Difficult to "read".
- 2. Does not reflect Boston's history or image.
- 3. Cannot function as a wayfinding/orientation tool.
- 4. Limited in media applications restrictive format does not work well at variety of scales.
- 5. Imagery implies sailing, but not urban waterfront walkway.



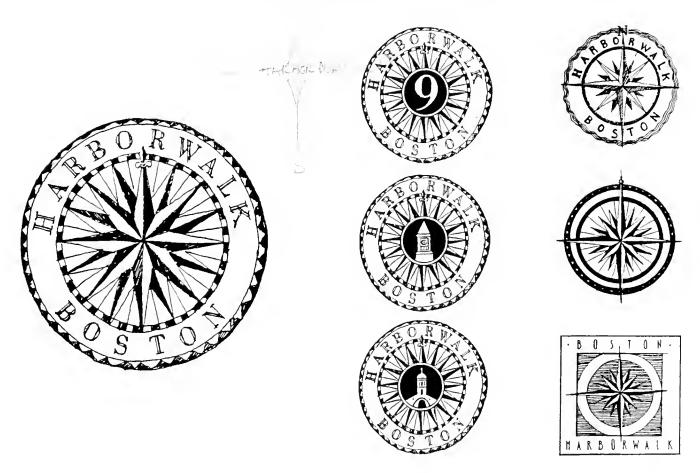
Logo 1 Compass Rose

Advantages

- 1) The definitive, traditional image for navigation, the compass rose immediately connotes Land & Sea "wayfinding".
- 2) Can be integrated with 'Boston' imagery.
- 3) Functions as a powerful wayfinding tool, and can be used to orient people in the landscape.
- 4) Easily applied in a variety of formats, seales, materials, colors, media, and dimensions.

Disadvantages

1) Imagery is complex and needs simplification.





Logo 2 Pictorial Oval

Advantages

- 1) Pictorial approach is most historic.
- 2) Easily applied to most scales, materials, colors, media & dimensions.

Disadvantages

- 1) Less effective as a wayfinding tool.
- 2) Not clear at smaller scales.
- 3) What picture can actually illustrate Boston?





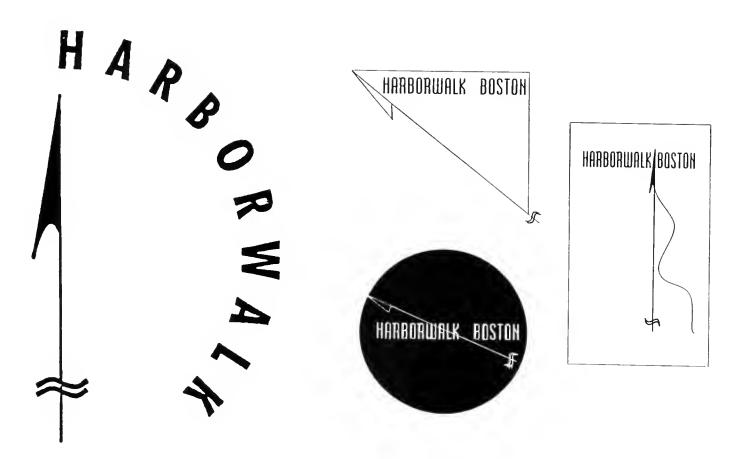
Logo 3 Harpoon

Advantages

- 1) Reflects maritime, nautical history
- 2) Functions well as a wayfinding tool.

Disadvantages

- 1) Less flexible for 2 & 3 dimensional applications.
- 2) Imagery does not directly reflect Boston.



Appendix

i	Overview Map
ii	Districts Map

iii Communication Elements

iv State Street Walk to the Sea Plan

v State House Communication Elements

vi Court Street Communication Elements vii Old State House Communication Elements

viii Old State House Communication Element viii Central Artery Communication Elements

ix Long Wharf Communication Elements

x Key Map

xi Burroughs Wharf Plan

xii Burroughs Wharf View

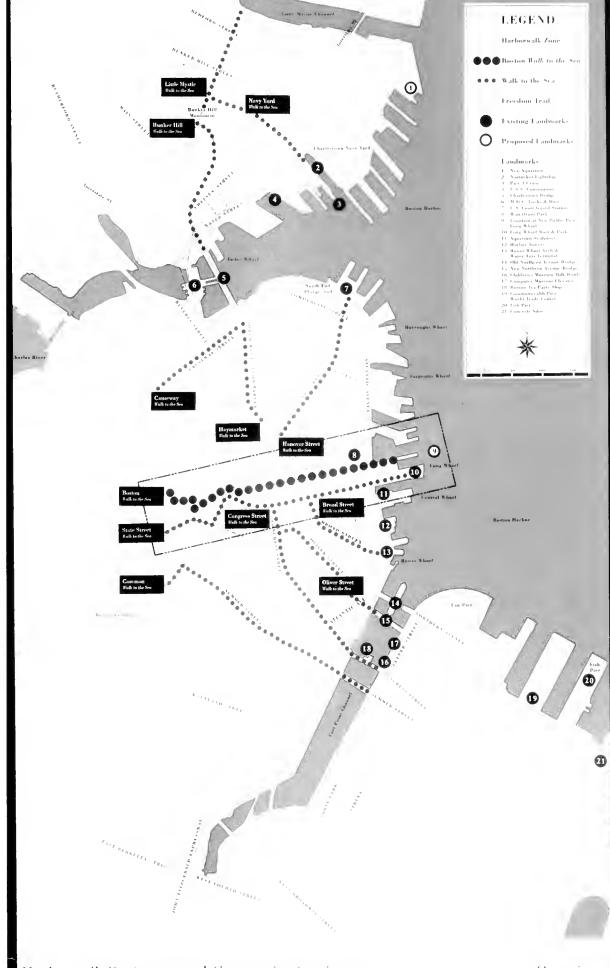
xiii Burroughs Wharf Communication Elements

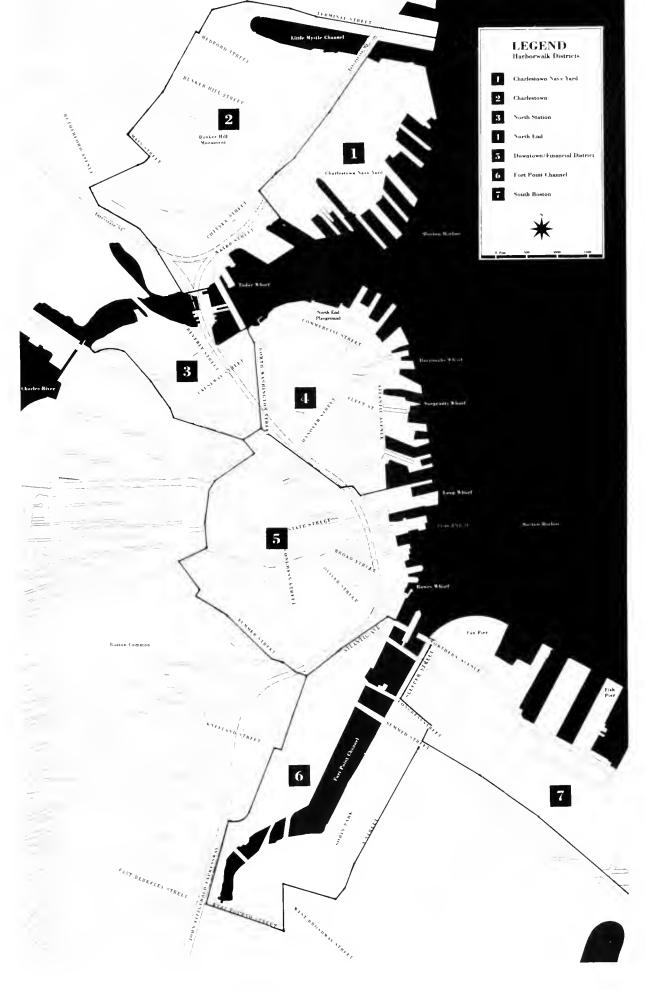
xiv Waterfront Park Plan xv Waterfront Park View

xvi Waterfront Park Communication Elements

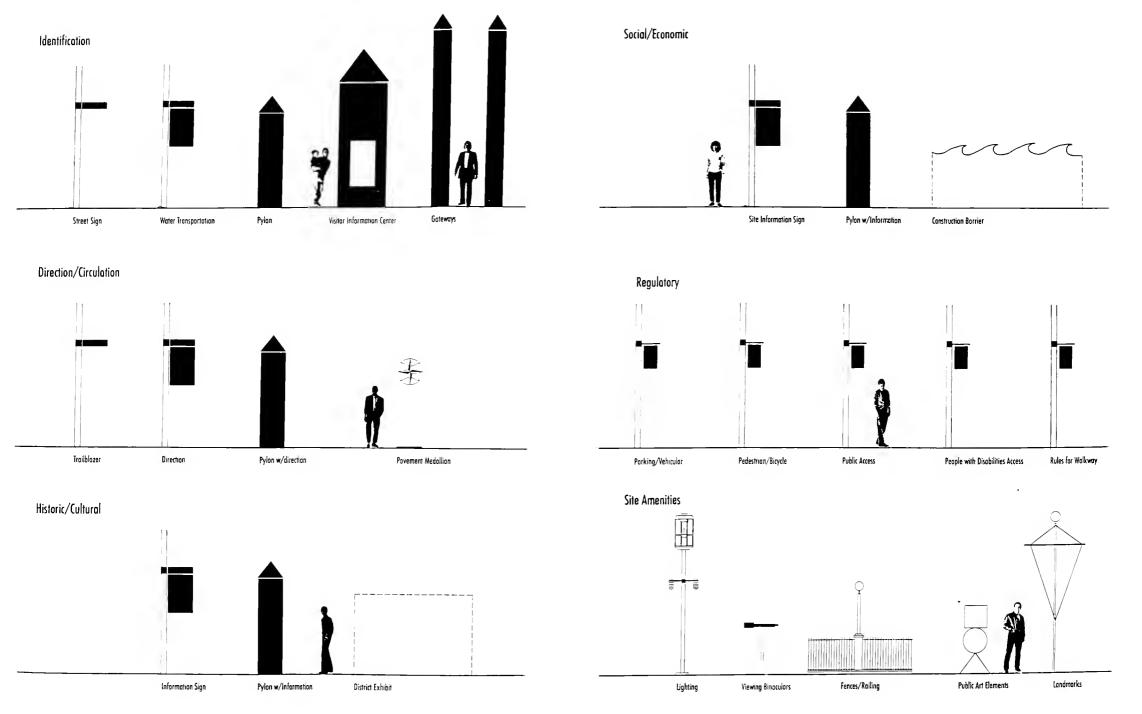
xvii Long Wharf Plan xviii Long Wharf View

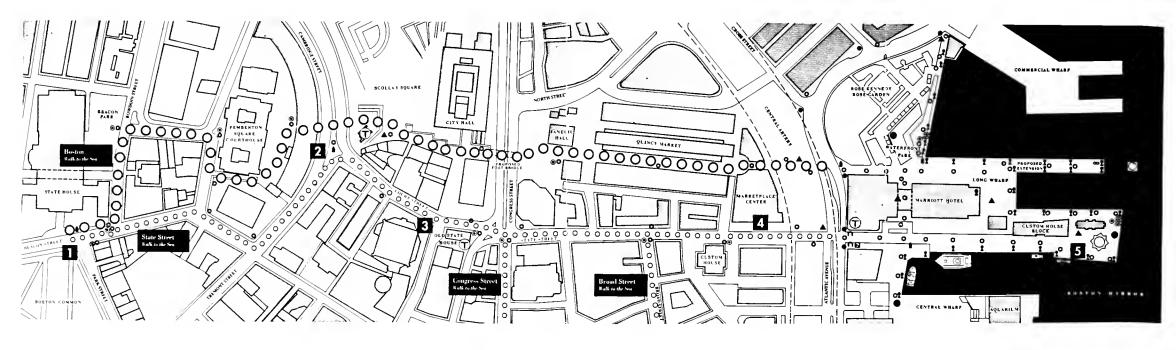
xix Long Wharf Communication Elements





Harborwalk Environmental Communication System





Harborwalk Environmental Communication System State Street Walk to the Sea Communication Elements Plan





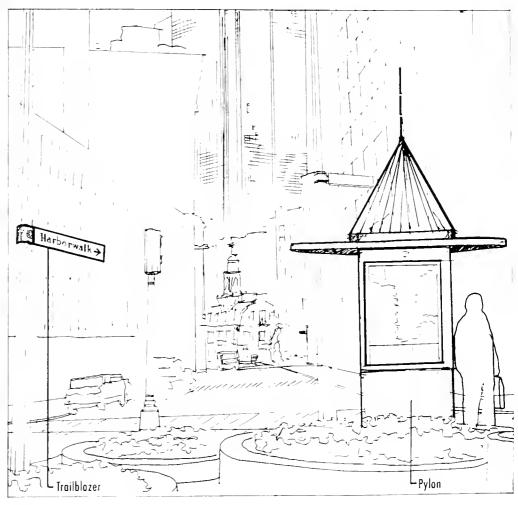
SCALE



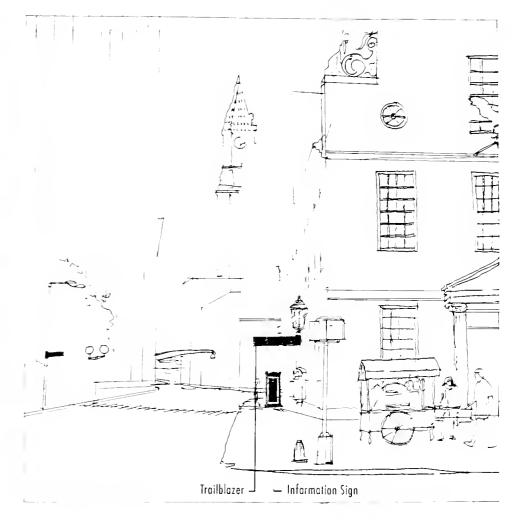


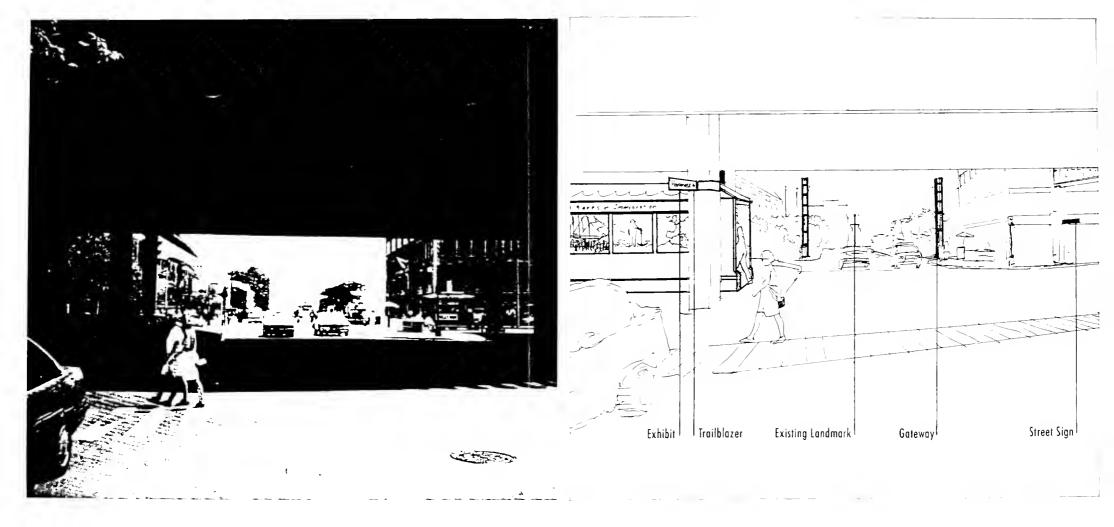




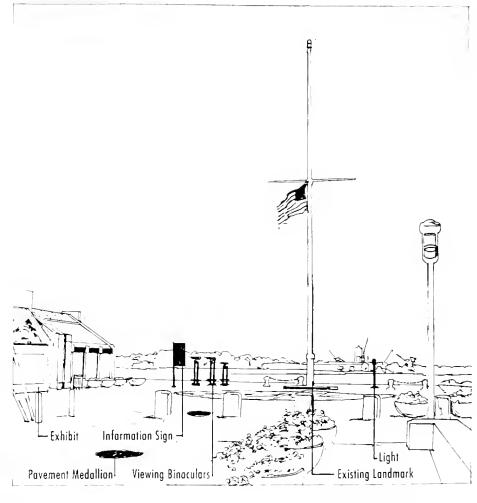








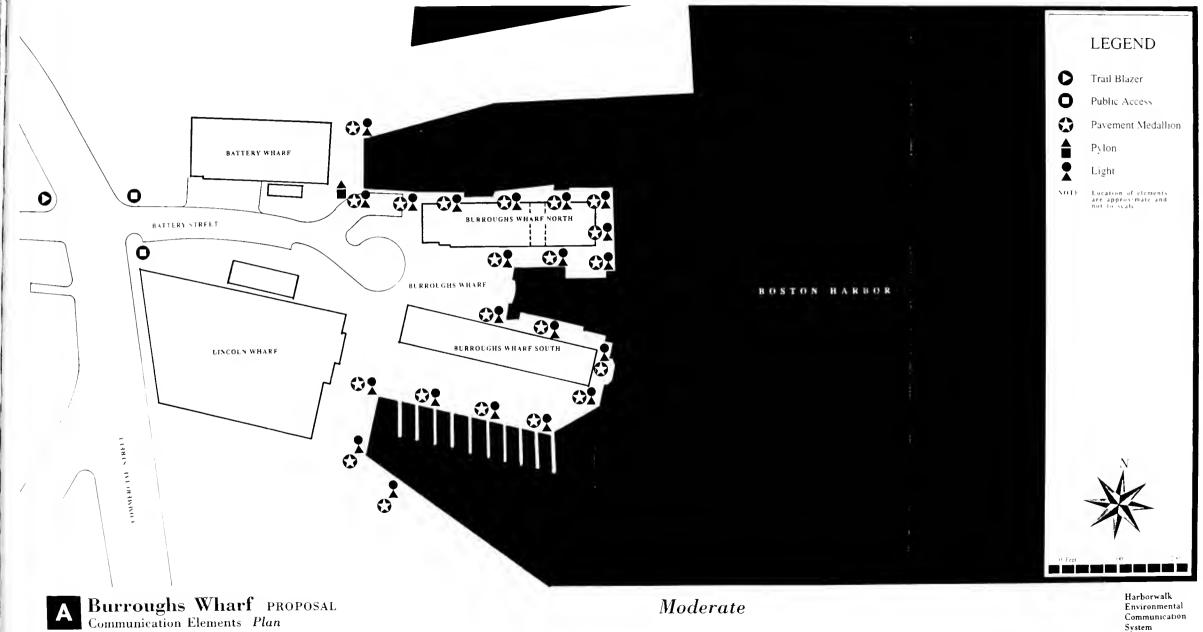




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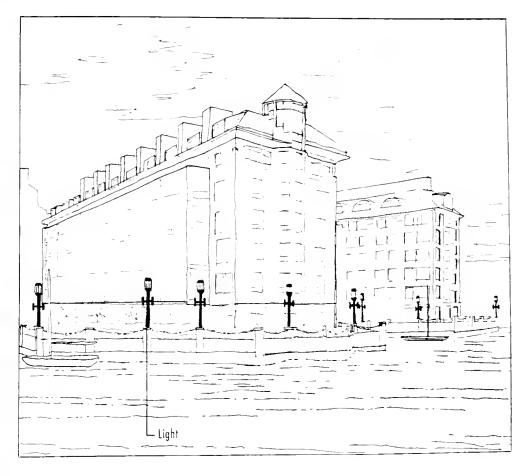


Harborwalk Environmental Communication System

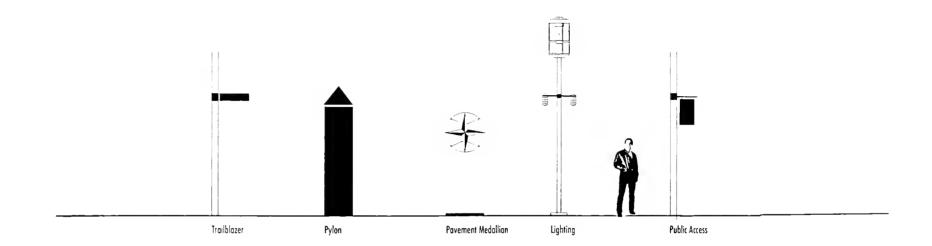


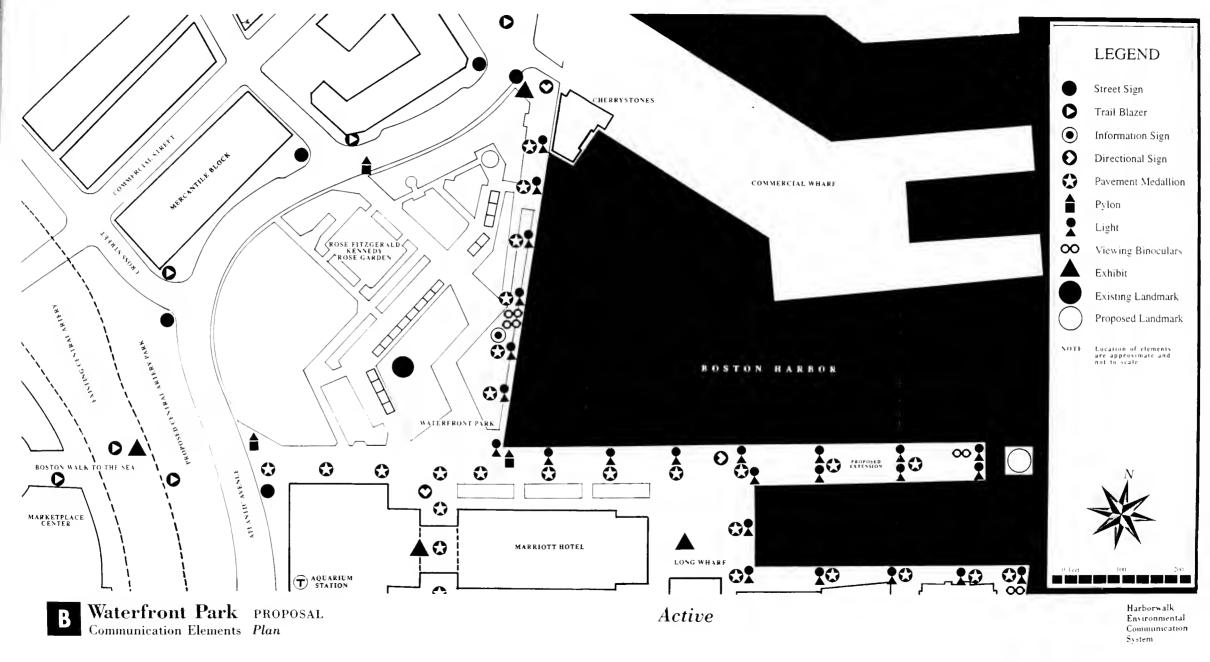
Environmental Communication System





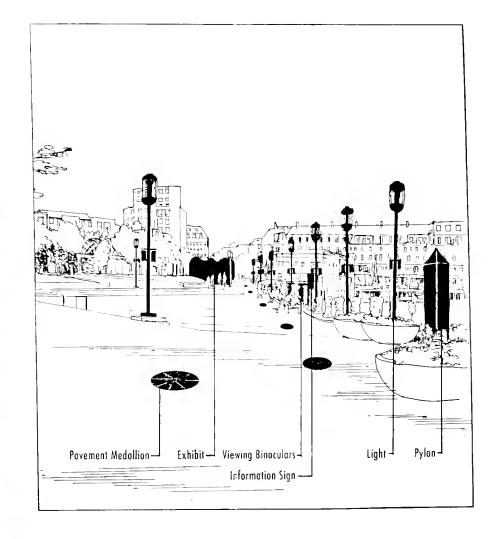




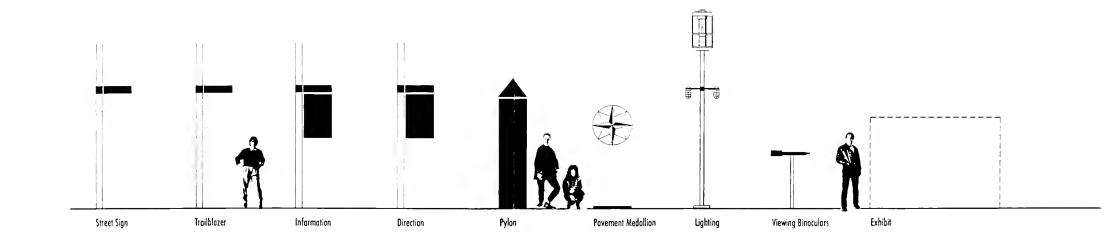


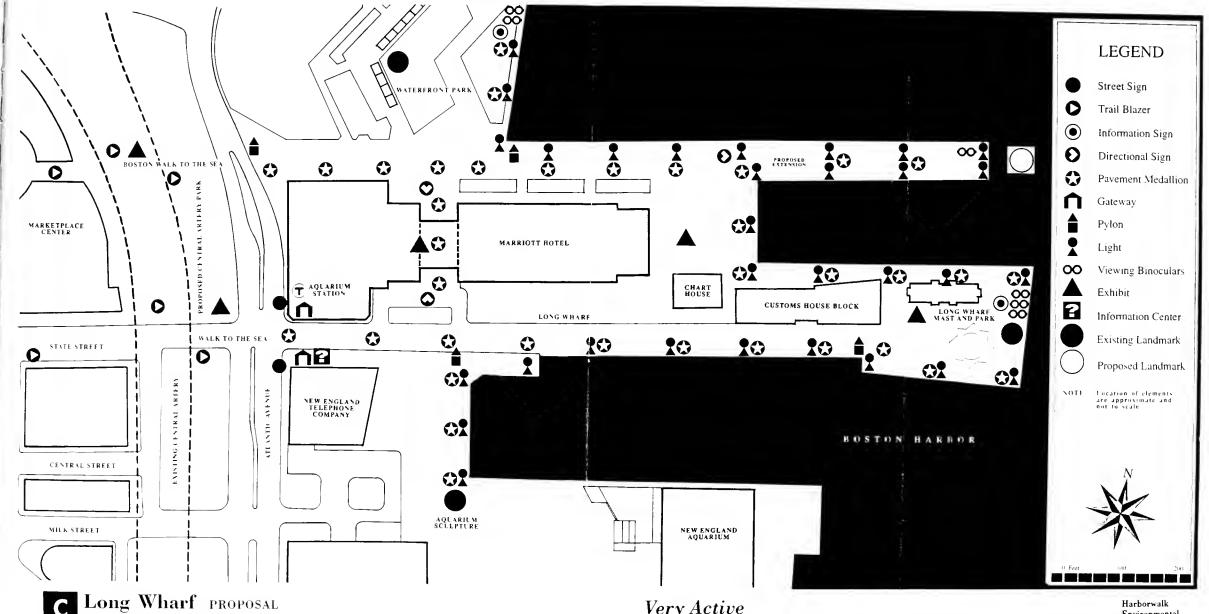










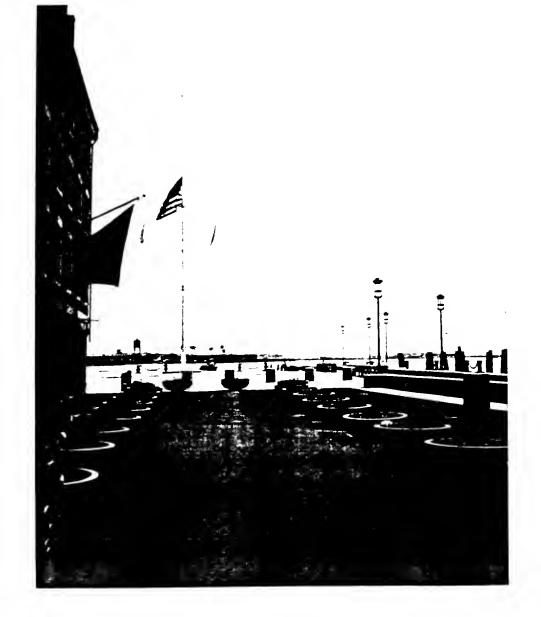


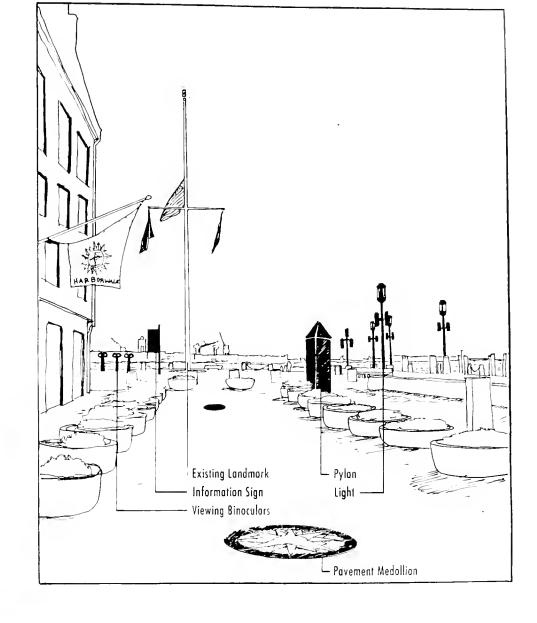
Communication Elements Plan

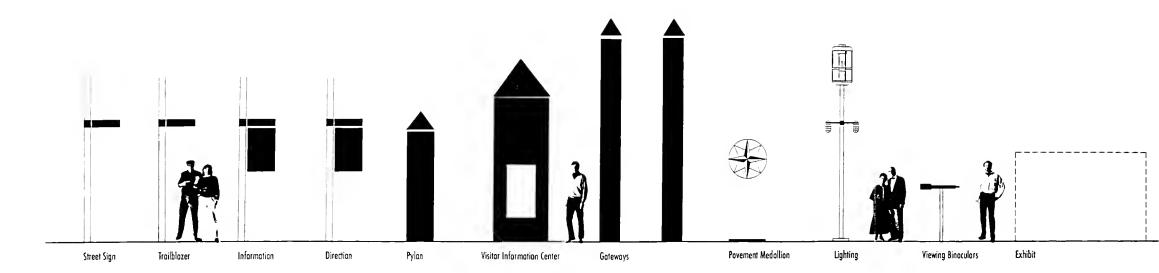
Very Active

Environmental Communication System









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